

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Request for Waiver by)	
)	
Northwest Passage School)	File No. SLD-197158
Webster, Wisconsin)	
)	
Schools and Libraries Universal Service)	CC Docket No. 02-6
Support Mechanism)	

ORDER

Adopted: February 22, 2005

Released: February 22, 2005

By the Telecommunications Access Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau:

1. The Telecommunications Access Policy Division has under consideration a Request for Waiver filed by Northwest Passage School, Webster, Wisconsin.¹ The Request for Waiver seeks waiver of the Funding Year 2000 FCC Form 471 filing window deadline for the schools and libraries universal service program. Consistent with precedent, we deny the Request for Waiver.

2. In the Request for Waiver, Northwest Passage School concedes it filed the FCC Form 471 application after the close of the filing window but requests a waiver of the filing window deadline.² Waiver is appropriate only if special circumstances warrant a deviation from the general rule, and such deviation would better serve the public interest than strict adherence to the rule.³

3. We find that Northwest Passage School has not demonstrated special circumstances to warrant waiver. The Commission has strictly and consistently enforced filing deadlines, allowing waivers of deadlines only in very limited and compelling situations.⁴ In light of the large number of applications

¹ Letter from Steve Ammend, Northwest Passage School, to Federal Communications Commission, filed July 5, 2000 (Request for Waiver).

² The deadline for Funding Year 2000 applications was January 19, 2000. *See* Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) website, <<http://www.sl.universalservice.org/whatsnew/121999.asp#fnl>>.

³ 47 C.F.R. § 1.3. *See Northeast Cellular Telephone Co. v. FCC*, 897 F.2d 1164, 1166 (D.C. Cir. 1990) (*Northeast Cellular*).

⁴ *See, e.g., Requests for Waiver by Atlanta Public Schools, et al., Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism*, CC Docket No. 02-6, Order, DA 05-430, para. 3 (Wireline Comp. Bur. rel. Feb. 16, 2005); *Requests for Waiver by El Dorado County Office of Education, et al., Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism*, CC Docket No. 02-6, Order, DA 05-431, para. 3 (Wireline Comp. Bur. rel. Feb. 16, 2005); *Requests for Waiver by E-Rate Central, et al., Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism*, CC Docket No. 02-6, Order, DA 05-432, para. 3 (Wireline Comp. Bur. rel. Feb. 16, 2005); *See also Request for Waiver by Stephen-Argyle Central School District, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Changes to the Board of Directors of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc.*, File No. SLD-228975, CC Docket Nos. 96-45 and 97-21, Order, 16 FCC Rcd 15879, 15880-81, paras. 4-5 (Acc. Pol. Div. 2001); *FCC Overrules Caldwell Television Associates*,

that the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) of USAC reviews and processes each year, it is administratively necessary to place on the applicant the responsibility of complying with all relevant rules and procedures, including filing deadlines.⁵ Hence, employee illness, staff failure to perform a job properly, inclement weather, or misunderstanding of the rules does not relieve applicants of their responsibility to comply with the Commission's rules and procedures.⁶ Further, the assertion that denial of an application may have a detrimental impact on an applicant does not create special circumstances or suggest particular facts that warrant a waiver of the Commission's rules.⁷ In keeping with our prior decisions, we determine that Northwest Passage School has not demonstrated the special circumstances necessary for a waiver of our rules.

4. ACCORDINGLY, IT IS ORDERED, pursuant to authority delegated under sections 0.91, 0.291, 1.3, and 54.722(a) of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.91, 0.291, 1.3, and 54.722(a), that the Request for Waiver filed by Northwest Passage School, Webster, Wisconsin, on July 5, 2000, is DENIED.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Vickie S. Robinson
Deputy Chief
Telecommunications Access Policy Division
Wireline Competition Bureau

Ltd., Public Notice, 58 RR 2d 1706 (1985) (permitting waivers only for particularly unusual and compelling circumstances).

⁵ See *Request for Review by Anderson School Staatsburg, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Changes to the Board of Directors of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc.*, File No. SLD-133664, CC Docket Nos. 96-45 and 97-21, Order, 15 FCC Rcd 25610, 25612-13, para. 8 (Com. Car. Bur. 2000) ("In light of the thousands of applications that SLD reviews and process each funding year, it is administratively necessary to place on the applicant the responsibility of understanding all relevant program rules and procedures.").

⁶ *Request for Waiver by Duncan Public Library, et al, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Changes to the Board of Directors of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc.*, File No. SLD-325536, CC Docket Nos. 96-45 and 97-21, Order, 17 FCC Rcd 22430, 22431, para. 3 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2003); *Request for Waiver by Dermott Special School District, et al, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Changes to the Board of Directors of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc.*, File No. SLD-252777, CC Docket Nos. 96-45 and 97-21, Order, 17 FCC Rcd 5091, 5093, paras. 3-5 (Com. Car. Bur. 2002). See also *Request for Waiver by Art In Context, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Changes to the Board of Directors of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc.*, File No. SLD-262426, CC Docket Nos. 96-45 and 97-21, Order, 17 FCC Rcd 5087, 5089, paras. 6-8 (Com. Car. Bur. 2002); *Request for Waiver by Midland School District, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Changes to the Board of Directors of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc.*, File No. SLD-269321, CC Docket Nos. 96-45 and 97-21, Order, 16 FCC Rcd 17920, 17922-23, paras. 5-6 (Com. Car. Bur. 2001).

⁷ *Application for Review by Information Technology Department State of North Dakota, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Changes to the Board of Directors of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc.*, File No. SLD-245592, CC Docket Nos. 96-45 and 97-21, Order, 18 FCC Rcd 21521, 21528, para. 18 (2003).